



April 3, 2013

To: House Health & Human Services Committee, David Howard, Chairman
Re: **SB 298**

My name is Mary Gallagher. In your packets you will see a statement detailing the funds received from the Endowment interest which is approximately \$40,000 annually and the federal Community Based Child Abuse Prevention grant to the Trust Fund which is approximately \$200,000 and has a state match of approximately 20% from state special revenue.

The Children's Trust Fund (CTF) Board is judicious in our use of these funds and these monies go a long way. This year, CTF funds were put to work in 13 Montana counties through grants to community organizations and family resource centers dedicated to educating parents and providing prevention services in those communities. They use programs that are evidenced-based, well tested, and in keeping with the latest scientific understanding of abuse and brain development. This year also, we were very pleased to begin implementation of a statewide program to address increased reports of childhood deaths from shaken baby syndrome. We are doing this in partnership with a grant from DPHHS.

CTF funds are not used for intervention services. That is the State's role. As a semi-autonomous entity, the CTF is in a unique position to reach people who may not be amenable to receiving services from the state but who are in desperate need of support and prevention education. In that role we also seek to spread the word to all Montanans about early childhood trauma and its' impact on Montana.

Given our limited funds, we continue to explore statewide initiatives which would allow us to reach more communities. Our challenge is to provide child abuse prevention resources to the higher at-risk counties and reservations in the state, whether that is due to the oil boom, the rural isolation, poverty, or general stressors that contribute to childhood trauma. Also, in this time of economic downturn, our work has an increased urgency as more Montanans are out of work causing additional stresses on Montana families.

I would like to tell you briefly about the work of this year's grantees and how they use their funds for Montana child abuse and neglect prevention. A representative from our statewide initiative on shaken baby syndrome will also tell you about that program.

Belgrade: **THRIVE -Belgrade Parent Place** provides parenting classes, support groups, resource library materials, home visiting, and community resource referrals. Parent Place offers Love and Logic and Parents as Teachers classes, family activities, and the "Dynamite Dads" support group. THRIVE expanded services to the Belgrade Schools including parent education and teacher trainings.

Billings: The Forever Families program offers support and parenting education to engage adoptive families with high-risk children. The program utilizes evidence-based curriculum and programming to assist adoptive parents in ongoing parent skill building. The program offers peer-support and respite care services for parents.

Crow Agency/Hardin: The FAMILY SUPPORT ENTWORK is expanding services to provide parenting classes combining an evidenced-based program, Nurturing Parenting Program, and Native American culture and traditions. Services are offered in Crow Agency, Pryor, and Laurel areas.

Dillon: The WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER/COMMUNITY SUPPORT CENTER offers services to provide the strengthening of rural families program including parenting classes and outreach.

Florence: The WORD Inc.-the Local Living Family Resource Center in Florence- promotes the strengthening of networks of support for families, schools, and community. It offers programs to strengthen family and community knowledge of child abuse prevention and strengthen leadership abilities in parents and community leaders around abuse prevention.

Glendive: Dawson County Healthy Communities Family Resource Center offers a several different community-based and prevention-focused programs and activities to strengthen and support families. The Center offers parenting education classes; support groups for parents; self-help parent support groups; Father's programs; school readiness; youth development; social connections; and resource and referrals.

Helena: Lewis and Clark City-County Health Department utilizes Year Round Parenting from the Heart-a parent education and support program; Circle of Security parent education, Parents Anonymous parent support, and Parents As Teachers Home Visitation model. The program is a member of the Early Childhood Coalition of the Greater Helena Area (ECC).

Kalispell: The Nurturing Center provides family and community based programs to children and their families. Services include evidenced-based programs such as Active Parenting, The Nurturing Program, and Parenting the Second Time Around. They do Caregiver Support programs and have a Resource Library and are committed to Early Childhood Education in the community.

Livingston: The Community Health Partners/Learning Partners Family Center has a mission to strengthen and support families in south central Montana. The program offers home visitation services; parent education; social support of families; early childhood education; primary health care access, and a family resource center. The program is aimed at enhancing and expanding services to meet the unique needs of families who began parenting as teenagers.

Miles City: Developmental Education Assistance Program (DEAP) provides a variety of family education, support, childcare, health nutrition, and residential services to families, children and adults. DEAP has expanded services and programs for caregivers, early intervention, supported and community living, family preservation, childcare resource and referrals, and health education.

Missoula: The Parenting Place provides home-visiting, respite child care, parent education classes, and parent/child visits to a highly underserved population of at-risk families who are currently involved in pre-release or parole programs. The Parenting Place offers technical assistance to connect with other

pre-release or parole programs. The Parenting Place also established a statewide coalition to synchronize parent support efforts for families' affected by incarceration; organizes the Montana Alliance of Families Touched by Incarceration (MAFTI.)

Plentywood: Community Incentive Program is now offering community-wide parenting classes using the "Nurturing Program" in an attempt to continue and expand their mentoring programs. The provide public information activities that focus on the healthy, positive development of parents and children as well as promotion of child abuse and neglect prevention activities.

Sidney: District II Alcohol and Drug Program-Family Resource Center offers community-wide parenting education classes using the "Nurturing Program", a computer-based program Parenting Wisely; resource and referral services, and a lending library. The Family Resource Center is located in the Richland County Library. The ultimate goal is to foster positive family relationship by continuing to strengthen families in Richland County.

In sum, in 2011-12, the CTF served a total of 23,992 adults and children through direct parental support services and community and public awareness programs through our mission to prevent child abuse. In 2010-11, we directly served 11,300 adults and children and in 2009-10 we served 20,833. We welcome the challenges ahead as we move forward in the urgent work to better strengthen and support families by increasing protective factors and lowering the risk factors that help reduce childhood abuse and neglect.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this important matter.